THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The cost per telephone depends on the size of the network. It will vary between Rs. 50,000 per line to Rs. 1 lakh per line depending upon the size of the system.

(c) No, Sir. This will be taken care of with proposed tariff.

Linking of Villages to the National Telephone Network

3416. SHRI ROSHAN LAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) how many villages in the country have been linked to the National Telephone Network till 31st January, 1988;

(b) how many more villages are expected to be linked during the current plan;

(c) what is the estimated average cost in rupees and foreign exchange for connecting each village; including cost of Copper cables to be provided; and

(d) what technical options are available to Government in order to minimise the costs?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) Presently the Department provides telephone facility in rural areas not on village basis, but on hexagonal basis. The country has been divided into haxagons of 5 Km sides each. Each hexagon covers an area of about 65 sq. km. Telephone facility is provided on fully subsidised basis at the principal village in each hexagon. Out of 50280 inhabited hexagons in the country, 26457 have been provided with telecom facility as on 31-1-1988. The number of villages covered will be much more than this number. All these villages provided with the telecom facility are linked to the National Telephone Network.

(b) More than 4800 hexagons are expected to be provided with telecom facility during the remaining period of the current plan.

(c) Average cost for providing a Long Distanc Public Telephone in a village works out to about Rs. 1.6 lakhs.

(d) Technical options under consideration for minimising the costs are:

(i) Line sharing system.

(ii) Multi access rural radio system.

(iii) Cellular Radio Telephone system.

Production of Biogas

3417. SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any State-wise evaluation of biogas production has been conducted; if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that biogas is going waste as per study conducted in Goa as reported in the 'Times of India' dated 26th October, 1987 and if so, what corrective steps have been taken;

(c) what has been the total investment on production of biogas so far; and

(d) how many plants have been installed, State-wise till 31st January, 1988 and how many of these are actually functioning at present?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) State-wise evaluation survey studies on performance of family type biogas plants were conducted in

1984/1985 and it was found that on an all-India basis about 84 per cent of the plants installed are functioning at any time. Inspection and checks are being continuously carried out.

(b) No, Sir. The Newspaper report refers to an evaluation study of 'Biogas plant Scheme' implemented by the Directorate of Agricultude, Panaji-Goa, brought out in September, 1986 by the Directorate of Planning, Statistics and Evaluation, Government of Goa. The study found 95 per cent plants functioning after taking into account the plants revived by the State Government. With regard to the observation made that bigger capacity plants are not being utilised to full capacity for want of adequate quantity of dung, steps have already been taken to promote smaller capacity plants in large numbers by making the quantum of Central assistance more attractive for smaller capacity plants and insisting upon the State Governments to ensure proper selection of beneficiaries and size of plants based on daily availability of dung.

(c) A total sum of Rs. 254.35 crores has been sanctioned to different State Governments and programme implementing agencies, including Khadi and Village Industries Commission under the National Project for Biogas Development since its inception in 1981-82 to 1987-88 (upto 10-3-1988).

(d) State-wise information for a total of 8,28,768 plants set up during the period 1981-82 to 1987-88 (upto January, 1988) is given in the Statement attached (See below). State Governments have got 85 000 plants inspected on a distributed basis during the period April-December, 1987 and the reports indicate that on an all-India basis 86 per cent of the plants are functioning.

Statement

State- ise number of family type boigas plants set up from 98 -82 *to* 987-88 *(upto January,* 1988)

S.No.	State/Union Territory	Total number of plants set up
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	73281
2.	Assam	3794
3.	Bihar	42279
4.	Gujarat	60013
5.	Haryana	13472
6	Himachal Pradesh	12090
7.	Karnataka	12930
8.	Kerala	15557
9.	Madhya Pradesh	27492
10.	Maharashtra	234283
11.	Orissa	18486
12.	Punjab	10205
13.	Rajasthan	26064

1	2	3
14.	Tamil Nadu	86176
15.	Uttar Pradesh	140145
16	West Bengal	19492
17.	Goa	907
18.	Other States/Union Territories	2101
	TOTAL	828768

Memorandum submitted by Bengal Immunity Workers

3418. **SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE:** Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a memorandum dated 10th March, 1988 from Bengal Immunity Workers' Union, Calcutta;

(b) if so, what are the salient features of the said memoraudum; and

(c) what is Government's reaction to the points and suggestions made in the Memorandum?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the memorandum, the Bengal Immunity Workers' Union has pointed out lower production, purchasing the loan licence products, non-utilization of certain newly purcnased machines lower capacity utilization of newly set up plant, and mismanagement of the company etc.

(c) Due to shortage of working capital, Bengal Immunity Ltd., Calcutta is unable to produce several items to full capacity. A rehabilitation Plan to improve the performance of the company has been submitted to Industrial Reconstruction Bank of India.

Profitability studies of Drug Companies

3419. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether profitability and performance studies of different drug companies is made by Government; if so, when it was last made in respect of each of them and the outcome thereof;

(b) what are the names of the drugs as well as formulations, both controlled and decontrolled for which prices have increased by different companies after the announcement of DPCO, 1987 indicating the original and increased prices and the percentage increase in each case;

(c) whether it is a fact that none of these companies referred to in part (b) above is producing category-I drugs of formulations;

(d) if so, what are the reasons thereof; and

(e) what was the ex-factory cost of production of bulk of various drugs and formulations during the last three years, year-wise in respect of each company?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) The profitability and performance studies